AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (cancelled): A method of displaying, in a video game device, an image of a player character and images of non-player characters, together with one type of background image from at least two or more switchable types of background images that display scene adjacent to each other in location, where the switching between background images requires a finite and unacceptable delay, comprising the steps of:

predetermining a plurality of operational modes which are assigned to said player character, and preparing an image corresponding to each operational mode;

displaying an image of the player character corresponding to any one of said plurality of operational modes together with images of said non-player characters, simultaneously with any one of said background images;

restricting the switching of said background images from the start until the completion of a predetermined particular operational mode of said plurality of operational modes so that a finite and unacceptable delay is avoided; and

switching said background images from one to another in response to manipulation of an input device of the video game device after the completion of the predetermined particular operational mode.

2. (currently amended): The method according to claim 1<u>0</u>, wherein the amount of information relating to each of said background images is determined on the basis of the video RAM capacity of said video game device.

3. (cancelled): The method according to claim 1, wherein the image of said player character is an image displaying said player character in a state where it is carrying a weapon;

said plurality of operational modes include a fighting mode representing a state wherein said player character is able to fight using said weapon, and a moving mode representing a state wherein said character moves whilst carrying said weapon; and

said fighting mode is set as said particular operational mode.

4. (cancelled): A computer-readable storage medium storing an image display program for displaying an image of a player character and images of non-player characters, together with one type of background image from at least two or more switchable types of background image that display scenes adjacent to each other in location, where the switching between background images requires a finite and unacceptable delay, in a video game device, comprising:

a region storing images corresponding respectively to a plurality of predetermined operational modes which can be adopted by said player character; and

a region storing an image display program for causing a video game device to implement processing for displaying an image of a player character corresponding to any one of said plurality of operational modes together with images of non-player characters, simultaneously with any one of said background images, processing for restricting the switching of said background images from the start until the completion of a predetermined particular operational mode of said plurality of operational modes so that a finite and unacceptable delay is avoided, and processing for switching said background images from one to another in response to manipulation of an input device of the video game device after the completion of the predetermined particular operational mode.

5. (currently amended): The storage medium according to ~~claim 4~~ claim 11, wherein the amount of information relating to each of said background images is determined on the basis of the video RAM capacity of said video game device.

6. (cancelled): The storage medium according to claim 4, wherein the image of said player character is an image displaying said player character in a state where it is carrying a weapon;

said plurality of operational modes include a fighting mode representing a state wherein said player character is able to fight using said weapon, and a moving mode representing a state wherein said character moves whilst carrying said weapon; and

said fighting mode is set as said particular operational mode.

7. (currently amended): A storage medium storing a game program incorporating an image display program that provides switchable background images, where the switching between background images requires a finite and unacceptable delay, the image display program comprising the steps of :

predetermining a plurality of operational modes which are assigned to a player character, and preparing an image corresponding to each operational mode;

displaying an image of the player character corresponding to any one of said plurality of operational modes together with images of non-player characters, simultaneously with any one of background images that display scenes adjacent to each other in location;

restricting changing of said background images from the start until the completion of a predetermined particular operational mode of said plurality of operational modes so that a finite and unacceptable delay is avoided; and

switching said background images from one to another in response to manipulation of an input device of the video game device after the completion of the predetermined particular operational mode

wherein the image of said player character is an image displaying said player character in a state where it is carrying a weapon,

said plurality of operational modes include a fighting mode representing a state wherein said player character is able to fight using said weapon, and a moving mode representing a state wherein said character moves whilst carrying said weapon, and

said fighting mode is set as said particular operational mode, and

wherein said character is unable to fight using said weapon in the moving mode.

8. (currently amended): An optical disk storing a game program incorporating an image display program that provides switchable background images, where the switching between background images requires a finite and unacceptable delay, the image display program comprising the steps of :

predetermining a plurality of operational modes which are assigned to a player character, and preparing an image corresponding to each operational mode;

displaying an image of the player character corresponding to any one of said plurality of operational modes together with images of non-player characters, simultaneously with any one of background images that display scenes adjacent to each other in location;

restricting changing of said background images from the start until the completion of a predetermined particular operational mode of said plurality of operational modes so that a finite and unacceptable delay is avoided; and

switching said background images from one to another in response to manipulation of an input device of the video game device after the completion of the predetermined particular operational mode

wherein the image of said player character is an image displaying said player character in a state where it is carrying a weapon,

said plurality of operational modes include a fighting mode representing a state wherein said player character is able to fight using said weapon, and a moving mode representing a state wherein said character moves whilst carrying said weapon, and

said fighting mode is set as said particular operational mode, and

wherein said character is unable to fight using said weapon in the moving mode.

9. (currently amended): A video game device internally comprising the storage medium storing a game program incorporating an image display program that provides switchable background images, where the switching between background images requires a finite and unacceptable delay, the image display program comprising the steps of :

predetermining a plurality of operational modes which are assigned to a player character, and preparing an image corresponding to each operational mode;

displaying an image of a player character corresponding to any one of said plurality of operational modes together with images of non-player characters, simultaneously with any one of background images that display scenes adjacent to each other in location;

restricting changing of said background images from the start until the completion of a predetermined particular operational mode of said plurality of operational modes so that a finite and unacceptable delay is avoided; and

switching said background images from one to another in response to manipulation of an input device of the video game device after the completion of the predetermined particular operational mode

wherein the image of said player character is an image displaying said player character in a state where it is carrying a weapon,

said plurality of operational modes include a fighting mode representing a state wherein said player character is able to fight using said weapon, and a moving mode representing a state wherein said character moves whilst carrying said weapon, and

said fighting mode is set as said particular operational mode, and

wherein said character is unable to fight using said weapon in the moving mode.

10. (currently amended): ~~The method according to claim 3~~ A method of displaying, in a video game device, an image of a player character and images of non-player characters, together with one type of background image from at least two or more switchable types of background images that display scene adjacent to each other in location, where the switching between background images requires a finite and unacceptable delay, comprising the steps of:

predetermining a plurality of operational modes which are assigned to said player character, and preparing an image corresponding to each operational mode;

displaying an image of the player character corresponding to any one of said plurality of operational modes together with images of said non-player characters, simultaneously with any one of said background images;

restricting the switching of said background images from the start until the completion of a predetermined particular operational mode of said plurality of operational modes so that a finite and unacceptable delay is avoided; and

switching said background images from one to another in response to manipulation of an input device of the video game device after the completion of the predetermined particular operational mode,

wherein the image of said player character is an image displaying said player character in a state where it is carrying a weapon,

said plurality of operational modes include a fighting mode representing a state wherein said player character is able to fight using said weapon, and a moving mode representing a state wherein said character moves whilst carrying said weapon, and

said fighting mode is set as said particular operational mode, and

wherein said character is unable to fight using said weapon in the moving mode.

11. (currently amended): ~~The computer-readable storage medium according to claim 6~~ A computer-readable storage medium storing an image display program for displaying an image of a player character and images of non-player characters, together with one type of background image from at least two or more switchable types of background image that display scenes adjacent to each other in location, where the switching between background images requires a finite and unacceptable delay, in a video game device, comprising:

a region storing images corresponding respectively to a plurality of predetermined operational modes which can be adopted by said player character; and

a region storing an image display program for causing a video game device to implement processing for displaying an image of a player character corresponding to any one of said plurality of operational modes together with images of non-player characters, simultaneously with any one of said background images, processing for restricting the switching of said background images from the start until the completion of a predetermined particular operational mode of said plurality of operational modes so that a finite and unacceptable delay is avoided, and processing for switching said background images from one to another in response to manipulation of an input device of the video game device after the completion of the predetermined particular operational mode,

wherein the image of said player character is an image displaying said player character in a state where it is carrying a weapon,

said plurality of operational modes include a fighting mode representing a state wherein said player character is able to fight using said weapon, and a moving mode representing a state wherein said character moves whilst carrying said weapon, and

said fighting mode is set as said particular operational mode, and

wherein said character is unable to fight using said weapon in the moving mode.